And I saw the sons of Ham gather in the valleys

after the scattering of Babel.

The dust clung to their feet like memory;

they said to one another,

“Let us take the stones that fell from the tower

and build again.”

They did not lift their eyes to heaven.

They looked only to the ground,

and the ground answered them.

Out of clay they shaped cities.

Out of copper they forged gates.

Out of sweat they made kings.

And the voice of the soil became their teacher.

Their hands learned power.

They bent rivers,

tamed beasts,

cut mountains into steps that reached the clouds.

Their glory was in what they could hold,

their comfort in what they could see.

They built temples to the sun and called it God,

for the light warmed their crops and made their kingdoms shine.

But the sun did not speak back.

Then famine came,

and the sons of Ham cried to the heavens.

The Lord gave them rain,

yet they thanked the idols of their own making.

Still,

a remnant among them remembered Noah’s words:

that the ground was cursed for man’s sake,

and only the God of Shem could make it bloom again.